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AUTHOR Broddason, Thorbjorn; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This report on a study conducted in Iceland to determine the relationship between mass media--especially television--and the attitudes of preadolescents and adolescents toward foreign countries begins by reviewing the following topics: (1) the history of television from its start in 1966 to the present in Iceland; (2) the origins of Icelandic television programs; (3) the question of "favorite country"; (4) the notion of cultivation theory; and (5) the social functions of video tapes. The research procedures and the results of three questionnaire-type surveys used with several hundred 10- to 15-year-old Icelanders (grades 4-9) in 1968, 1979, and 1985 are then discussed. This discussion covers the students' responses to questions on what country they would move to if they had to move away from Iceland; reasons for the student's choice were requested only on the 1985 survey. Also discussed are the cultivating effects of television as determined by a comparison of students' television-viewing habits and their choice of country, as well as how their preferences had changed over time, how they perceived the world around them, and the relationship between their world views and their use of the mass media. Tables summarize major findings from each of the surveys, and it is suggested that there has been an increase in the role of television as an agent of socialization and a corresponding diminution in the role of the school. Eleven tables and 29 references are included. (CGD)

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Thorbjörn Broddason,
Elías Hédinsson,
Ingibjörg Jónsdóttir,
Ólafur Jónsson

FAVOURITE COUNTRY

AS A MEASURE OF TELEVISION-MEDIATED WORLD VIEW

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1. INTRODUCTION: TELEVISION IN A TINY SOCIETY.

The role of the mass media in shaping twentieth century society in the Western world is without any doubt considerable. It is not uncommon to have it labelled as revolutionary. If we were to do so we would probably have to add that we seem to have a permanent revolution on our hands.

Yet, in a way, it is a silent revolution (to borrow another phrase). This is a somewhat paradoxical statement as silence is probably the last word to think of when modern mass media are brought up for discussion. Perhaps we can be reconciled to the paradox by Inglehart`s observation that:

> "It seems that the industrialized world is actually undergoing change which is more rapid and more genuinely new than what is occurring in the New Nations. But change in the industrialized world is far harder to grasp, harder to conceptualize. One tends to use familiar images because we have no model of the future." (Inglehart 1977, p. 6).

In this paper we are concerned with changes in attitudes and values among young people in an industrialized Western society which, owing to its small size, its compactness, and its cultural and geographical distinctness, makes the changes perhaps not as hard to grasp or conceptualize as those of bigger societies.

The mass media rank as major agents of socialization due to their central position as mediators of information about our social reality. Through their accessibility and proximity to people`s daily lives they tempt us constantly to spend our free time in their company. Thus they infiltrate our total existence.

The mass media only manage to reflect a small fraction of reality and only from selected areas (McCron 1976). The information and the ideas that are

transmitted by the media are circumscribed by the ideas and interests of the owners of the media as well as those of the media workers, which again are influenced by the social structure (Hemánus, 1984). Whenever the actual range of view of the media is demonstrated (Table 1 below, Gerbner and Marvanyi 1977, Varis 1984, Galtung and Ruge 1970) its predictable narrowness is brought home to us.

Through identification and interaction with other people we learn from experience and gather knowledge about the behaviour of others. Now, however, the models for behaviour lie increasingly outside the family and outside the realm of immediate experience. Television, with its lopsided view of the world, has to some extent replaced the extended family and the close-knit community of pre-industrial times (Noble 1975). This is at any rate a prevalent idea and the concern of many. In the words of the author of the Pilkington Report more than twenty years ago, television was "one of the major long-term factors that would shape the moral and mental attitudes, and values of our society" (quoted by Curran and Seaton 1985, p. 212).

In what follows we shall attempt to throw some light on attitudes related to changes in mass media use. We do this by tracing by what means young people in Iceland did come to a relatively serious decision which reflects directly on their view of the outside world. This decision concerns a hypothetical situation in which they have to choose a country to replace their own.

The means at our disposal are three questionnaire-type surveys, put to several hundred young Icelanders (10 to 15 years` old) in 1968, 1979 and 1985, respectively. The questionnaires dealt, among other things, with

media-habits in general, with particular emphasis on television.

Before we proceed further a few remarks are in order about the development of television in Iceland.

The Icelandic television service is operated by a state-owned, formally independent company, the State Radio (Ríkisútvarpið, or RÚV for short), which held monopoly rights on broadcasting from its inception in 1930 until the end of 1985. Television was started in a modest way in 1966, transmitting programmes only three days a week, to an area where some 60 per cent of the population lived. The service was rapidly expanded however until well over 90 per cent of the population could receive television and transmissions were extended to 6 days of the week, 11 months of the year (closing down every Thursday and the whole of July each year). Since 1983 the service extends to every month of the year, but the Icelanders have yet to experience a regular television service on Thursdays. The service operates a single television channel. It is a national medium in a very real sense as the most popular programmes gather 75% of the adult population around the set at the same time (Broddason and Hédinsson 1985).

Television in Iceland is, however, older than Icelandic television: Back in 1955 the American military at Keflavík Air Base started a television station for their servicemen, using a 50 watt transmitter. In 1960 they installed a 250 watt transmitter. Already in the first years a number of enterprising Icelanders had caught on to the idea of acquiring a television receiver and tuning in to the Keflavík transmitter, but after 1960 there was an explosive growth in the number of antennae appearing on the roofs of Reykjavík homes. Although the conflicts that this situation generated are of considerable sociological interest, they will not be

dealt with here; suffice it to remark that the row about the Keflavík television was a major issue in the cultural debate during the fifties and sixties. It undoubtedly hastened the onset of Icelandic television by several years. The transmissions from the base were in the end confined to the military community by means of cable distribution (Broddason 1970, 1979). The historical relevance of the Keflavík transmitter for the central question of this paper will be explained below.

In 1968, when the first of the three surveys was carried out, television reached roughly 70 per cent of the population, as the transmission network was still under construction at the time, and the northern and eastern regions were entirely without television; programmes were transmitted 18 hours a week on average during 1968.

In 1979, the time of our second survey, the media situation had changed in many ways. Television covered 98 per cent of the population, colour television had been introduced, and programming time was now on average about 25 hours a week.

By 1985, when the third survey was carried out, important further changes had taken place in the world of Icelandic mass media: Televised hours per week were close to 30; no longer were the Icelanders starved of television for a whole month during the summer; after more than half a century of single-channel radio RÚV had started a second radio channel, almost exclusively devoted to popular music; and video, a new visual mass medium, virtually nonexistent in the country in 1979, had hit the Icelandic market with such a force that by March 1985 38 per cent of the population had acquired a video recorder (Broddason and Héðinsson 1985). According to our survey a third of 10-15 year old youths were using a video recorder six

hours a week or more.

The introduction of video in the Icelandic setting is particularly relevant because, as already mentioned, television is restricted to one channel, transmitting only some 30 hours a week. From the point of view of television, this means competition where none existed before. For the recipient of video, it means that there are alternative pictures on the small screen where no alternatives existed before.

2. THE ORIGINS OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMES.

The Icelandic television service is heavily dependent on imported programmes.

TABLE 1: The Origins of Programmes shown by the Icelandic Television Service.

	1968 %	1979 %	1983 %	1984 %
Iceland	36	33	35	32
UK	26	26	27	26
USA	21	16	15	20
Nordic countries	7	9	10	6
West Germany	1	3	5	5
France	5	4	2	2
All other	4	9	5	10

(Sources: Ársskýrslur Ríkisútvarpsins (Yearbooks) 1973, 1980, 1983, 1984).

A national medium is not necessarily a medium of the national culture. Television in a small country like Iceland is not a medium of the national culture in the same sense as the other daily mass media, the radio and the major newspapers. On the contrary, two thirds of the time Icelandic television functions as some sort of a glorified relay point for undiluted external cultural products. We are aware that this is not a very original observation (see f.i. Tunstall 1977), but we find it relevant in this

context to emphasize that television in a small country is a qualitatively different thing from television in a large country. The problem of cultural imperialism is, however, not confined to small nations as even some major European nations may be experiencing a trend towards an internationalization or, perhaps more properly, as Richeri (1985) suggests, denationalization of their broadcasting systems. Television all over the world relies heavily on British and American production, as is well documented by Varis (1984), and in more recent publications we find estimates of even higher shares of Anglo-American programmes (Schiller 1985, p. 11). At the time of Varis' survey, however, Iceland ranked far above any other European country in terms of the relative share of foreign programmes (Varis 1984, p. 21).

If a world map were to be drawn on the basis of Table 1 by adapting the rules laid down by Gerbner and Marvanyi (1977) it would present a rather grotesque picture.

3. FAVOURITE CONTRY.

Is there any simple method available to detect the relationship between television viewing and attitudes toward foreign countries? This was a question which Broddason was faced with when in 1968 he wanted to detect in a sample of several hundred Icelandic youngsters possible differences in attitudes towards the United States in relation to their degree of exposure to the television at the Keflavík Air Base.

His solution was the following question:

"Imagine that you would have to move away from Iceland to another country. To which country would you choose to move? Please write down the name."

Although the idea was sparked by a very specific problem, it was apparent from the start that the question could serve a much wider purpose. It is a simple and straightforward question on a rather profound, albeit hyothetical, issue for any respondent. We contend that it is a question which requires the respondent to make up his or her mind as to which country, apart from his or her own, is closest to the respondent's liking: Which is his or her favourite country? A comparison between television-viewing habits and answers to this question might help to clarify the question of the cultivating effects of television.

We wish to consider how these preferences have changed over time, study them against the background of age and sex and test them on the intervening variables of mass media use, particularly the use of television and video.

Other researchers have subsequently addressed these questions (Werner 1979, von Feilitzen 1980, Hardardóttir 1980,) and our results are relevant to theirs, especially since our research methods have been coordinated to some extent. In this paper, however we shall deal solely with the Icelandic material and mainly concern ourselves with the 1985 sample.

In our survey the question on favourite country was followed by another dealing with the reasons for the choice indicated. While our empirical data derive from the concrete question cited above, our more general point of departure is the question of people's perception of the world around us and the relationship between world-views and the uses of the mass media. In this manner we hope, as already indicated, to contribute to an

assessment of Gerbner`s hypothesis that a heavy dose of television cultivates a certain outlook on the world in general.

4. CULTIVATION THEORY.

George Gerbner characterizes the consequenses of the agenda setting function of the media thus:

> "The dominant agencies of communication produce the messages that cultivate the dominant image patterns. They structure public agenda of existence, priorities, values and relations." (Gerbner 1972 p. 159).

On basis of this we may regard media messages as representing the ideas of the ruling classes. The media reveal a reality which is not congruent with the experiences of the majority of the audience. This biased treatment can alienate people from values and norms in their own cultural environment, either by overlooking them or by treating them as subordinate (Hédinsson 1981, p. 137). According to Gross, one of the main proponents of the cultivation theory,

> "television is the cultural arm of the established industrial order and as such serves primarily to maintain, stabilize and reinforce rather than to alter, threaten or weaken conventional beliefs and behaviours" (Gross 1977, p. 180).

To Gerbner and his associates, the power-structure of the society is reflected in the content of the media. Men appear on television three times the rate of women; minority groups, manual workers, children and old people are on the margins of the medium`s range of attention, often in the role of victims to the violence which is disproportionately prevalent in the world of television (Gerbner et al. 1979, 1980).

Gerbner`s hypothesis about the homogeneous character of the content of television in general has been heavily criticized, among other things on the grounds that Europeans` ideas about violence are at odds with those of American television viewers. The reason for this difference may be the

fact that an American heavy viewer watches twice as many acts of violence as e.g. a British heavy viewer (Wober 1984, Hawkins and Pingree 1984, p. 322-323).

5. THE USES OF TAPES.

The introduction of video implies a change in the media culture of any society. Not only does it amount to new channel on television, it is also a channel over which the recipient has almost complete control. Whereas television is above all the family medium, being centrally edited, having a middle-aged bias and being cencored with timid souls in mind, video is very much (but certainly not exclusively) the youth medium. Contrary to television, it is the recipient who decides what is shown on video, when it is shown and for how long. Furthermore, the tapes containing the programmes can be moved from one location to another with complete ease, as one person can walk around with literally hundreds of hours of video programmes. Hence, the habit which has developed in youth peer groups to gather together for video viewing in those homes where the adults are out. All this is bound to appeal to young people. The benefits of video from the point of view of young people can best be described, as Keith Roe (1983) has done, with the two key words freedom and control. Admittedly, the programme selection is restricted to what is available on the video rental market, so in actual fact the freedom and control are being exercized within very definite limits. The Icelandic video market is restricted well beyond 90 per cent to Anglo-American feature films.

What has been said above about the social functions of video tapes applies obviously to audio tapes as well, only more so. The vast increase in the ownership of lightweight, portable audiocasette-recorders and radio receivers during the seventies was highly significant for the development

of the youth culture. Young people use them to help create the right mood for each social situation, and thus turn them into an essential part of their environment. They may, among other things, have paved the way for changes in orientations towards other countries. The sociological implications of these electronic gadgets seem to have been rather neglected by researchers until recently (this, however, is changing, see e.g. Roe 1983).

6. RESEARCH PROCEDURE.

In March 1985 a survey was conducted among a random sample of 821 Icelandic boys and girls aged 10 to 15. The survey was in the form of a written questionnaire which was submitted to the respondents in school during regular school hours. This survey is the latest in a series of three of identical design which was started by the senior author in 1968 (Broddason 1970) and continued in 1979 (Broddason and Hédinsson 1983). On all three occasions the surveys were done at the same time of the year (March) and the samples were drawn from the same three communities. They are Reykjavík, the capital, in the South-West with a population of 86 thousand inhabitants; Akureyri, a commercial and industrial town in the North (14 thousand inhabitants); and Vestmannaeyjar, a fishing village on an island off the South coast (4 thousand inhabitants). The total population of Iceland is about 240 thousand people.

The survey was carried out in the three communities among youths aged 10-15 years old. The sample framework was grades 4 to 9 in elementary school, which is attended by practically every child, except the 9th grade which was not compulsory and where there is consequently a falling off of

a few percentages. In 1968 the 9th grade did not exist. Table 2 gives the sampling figures and the response rates in each of the three surveys. All the elementary schools in Akureyri and Vestmannaeyjar were included, whereas in Reykjavík we selected 9 school districts out of some 23 districts in the community. The districts selected represented all major social and geographical areas in the city.

TABLE 2: Sample Sizes and Response Rates in each Community in the three Surveys.

	1968			1979			1985		
	Sample	Resp.	%	Sample	Resp.	%	Sample	Resp.	%
Reykjavík	467	372	80	530	484	91	544	491	90
Akureyri	138	130	94	199	182	91	212	198	93
Vestm.eyjar	126	99	79	148	139	94	148	132	89
Total	731	601	82	877	805	92	904	821	91

7. RESULTS.

7.1. TRAVELLING YOUTH.

Although it seems reasonable to assume that attitudes to the world are derived to a considerable extent from the mass media, and particularly television, there are of course other means, among them own personal experience. Table 3 shows the changes in travelling experience that occurred between the three measuring points.

TABLE 3: Countries that the respondents had visited.
Only first mentioning listed.

	1968 %	1979 %	1985 %
A Nordic country*	7	15	27
The United Kingdom	3	4	4
Spain	-	13	12
The USA	2	4	6
All other countries	4	14	16
No country visited	84	50	37
N:	601	805	821

*The Nordic countries are (apart from Iceland):
Denmark, the Faroes, Finland, Greenland, Norway and Sweden.

We asked our respondents to write down the names of the countries which they had visited in descending order according to length of stay, but in the table only the first-mentioned is considered. Thus the presentation in Table 3 is not fully satisfactory as we have actually left out important bits of information. Although the problem is present on all three measuring occasions it is most serious in 1985. By that time several of our respondents were so widely travelled that in listing the countries they exhausted entirely the space on the questionnaire which on the two previous occasions had been ample for the same purpose. In spite of this shortcoming the vast increase in foreign travels among the respondents over these 17 years is strikingly demonstrated in Table 3. In 1968 only a sixth part of our respondents had travelled abroad. Eleven years later half the respondents had been abroad, and in 1985 nearly two thirds had been abroad. Much of these travels is restricted to being bundled into an airplane and flown directly to an international holiday resort and back again a fortnight or so later. Yet we think it fair to assume that knowledge about foreign countries has increased considerably during these years as a consequence of increased travelling.

7.2. CHOICE OF FAVOURITE COUNTRY.

Considering the social and cultural changes during 17 year span of this research project, some of which have been mentioned and briefly discussed above, one would expect changes to occur in the pattern of answers to our question about favourite country.

Some widening in the range of choices would be expected due to wider personal experience;

the constant barrage of Anglo-American material on television (and video) would be expected to lead to increased orientation towards Britain and the USA;

the strong Nordic bias of the Icelandic school system should pull in that direction;

the exposure to numerous documentary television programmes from far away and exotic places might be expected to yield some effects;

the overwhelmingly negative coverage of the Socialist countries in all the mass media should also be expected to have an effect.

In 1968 22 countries were chosen; in 1979 the number had increased to 30; and in 1985 to 36. This increase is definite, even if we take into consideration the higher number of respondents on the later occasions. On basis of these figures we might be tempted to conclude that young Icelanders' mental picture of the world of has grown slightly since 1968, although the issue is much more complicated; for one thing the daily news are more likely to scare you off the outside world than anything else (which would lead us to this hypothesis: 'The more you learn about a foreign country through the daily news, the less likely you will be to want to settle there). In our opinion the actual increase in awareness about the world during those 17 years is much greater than the increased number of favourite countries indicates.

In 1968 one respondent gave the Soviet Union as his or her choice; in 1979 no one chose a Socialist country, whereas 5 individuals did in 1985.

Otherwise, Table 4 gives us some idea of the validity of the above assumptions.

TABLE 4: "Imagine that you would have to move away from Iceland to another country. To which country would you choose to move?"

	1968 %	1979 %	1985 %
United Kingdom	17	8	22
USA	15	21	15
A Nordic country	49	46	30
Other NW-Europe	8	8	13
Southern Europe	6	7	9
All other countries	5	10	11
N:	530	769	790

The table reveals some quite remarkable changes over the years.

The enduring appeal of the Anglo-American block is one of the most important immediate observations to be made on this table. In the next section we shall discuss the possible role of the media (television, radio, video- and audio-tapes) in this result, and consider whether we have here an example of the "mainstreaming effect" (Gerbner et al. 1980).

Within the Anglo-American block, the dramatically changing fortunes of Britain beg for a closer look. We shall below discuss the possibility that there is a direct relationship between the popularity of the UK on our measure and certain fluctuations in the visibility of Britain within the world popular culture.

The decline of the Nordic countries (which we shall for our purposes treat as one group) is no less dramatic than Britain's ups and downs. Back in

1968 half the respondents would have turned to another Nordic country in case they had to leave Iceland. In 1979, this proportion had only slightly diminished, whereas in 1985 it crashes down to less than a third. This occurs at the time of a great boom in foreign travels in which the Nordic countries appear to have the lion`s share.

The strong Nordic bias of the school system and the official culture in general is a well established phenomenon. Iceland, which is an independent republic of more than 40 years` standing, used to be a part of the Danish commonwealth, and is now probably the only independent country in the world where Danish is a compulsory subject in school. This is only one of the innumerable manifestations of the strong pro-Nordic official policy. Yet, the Nordic countries are rapidly losing favour among the young. Let us turn back to Table 1. Here an explanation suggests itself: From the establishment of the Icelandic television service, Anglo-American productions have provided the backbone of its programme-selection, whereas Nordic productions have been merely a trickle, and a diminshing one at that. We are suggesting an increase in the role of televsision as an agent of socialization, and a corresponding diminution in the role of the school.

Some interesting changes of fortune have occurred within the Nordic group of countries, according to our surveys. These are not our concern in this paper, but for the benefit of those interested, they are as follows:

	1968 %	1979 %	1985 %
Denmark	23	11	14
Norway	15	16	7
Sweden	8	13	5
Finl./Faroes/Greenl.	3	6	4

The rank-order of the five most-favoured countries on each measuring occasion was as follows:

1968	1979	1985
DENMARK	USA	UK
UK	NORWAY	USA
NORWAY	SWEDEN	DENMARK
USA	DENMARK	NORWAY
SWEDEN	UK	SWEDEN

As it turns out the same 5 countries recur as occupants of the 5 top places on each measuring occasion and they account for respectively 81 per cent, 75 per cent and 67 per cent of the choices. These also happen to be the countries which supply the bulk of the foreign television programmes shown by RÚV (that is to say if we lump the Nordic countries together into one group). They are also the countries which, together with Spain and Italy, are the most frequently visited by our respondents. For these reasons, and because they can each be treated as culturally homogeneous in the relative sense we find these countries particularly advantageous for closer study. Hence, we shall in the remainder of the paper devote our attention primarily to the United States, the United Kingdom and the Nordic countries (these last being treated as one cultural and geographic unit).

We gave our respondents an open-ended question regarding the reasons for their particular choice. Their answers are summarized in the following table.

TABLE 5: Reasons given for choice of favourite country: 1985 sample

	Nordic %	UK %	USA %
Beauty of the country	28	23	30
I know people there	22	11	22
I have been there	18	8	7
Close/similar to Iceland	11	2	-
It is entertaining, fun	7	17	7
I know the language	6	20	7
Good living conditions	5	6	16
Sports reasons	3	10	1
Explicit mass media reasons	-	1	4
Other reasons	1	1	5
N:	245	181	123

The somewhat diffuse category of physical beauty tops all three lists. This may very well reflect exhaution with the unpredictability of Icelandic weather. Otherwise Table 5 shows some interesting similarities and dissimilarities.

The strength of personal ties to the Nordic countries is very apparent (either having been to the country or knowing people there). Nearness and similarity are also important for choice of the Nordic countries, but hardly at all for the English-speaking countries. This puts the Nordic countries apart and serves to emphasize the special relationship between them.

The mass media are strikingly inconspicuous on this list, but that does not mean that they are without importance. Particularly in the case of Britain, which leapt from fifth to first place between 1979 and 1985, there seems good reason to suspect media-influenced preferences. The regular live screening on television of English soccer matches, which was begun in the interval between the surveys, is an obvious example. So is the introduction of the second channel on radio, mentioned above, and

weekly presentations of videotaped performances by various popular music groups. Britain emerges as the land of fun and entertainment, which appears directly related to the success of British pop-groups. We thought it rather significant that the existence of pop-music groups like Duran Duran or Wham! was, by some of our respondents, given as an explicit reason for their choice of Britain as favourite country in 1985.

In 1968, when Britain came second on the list of favourite countries, legendary groups like the Beatles and the Rolling Stones were at the height of their fame and leading in the world of popular music. In 1985, Duran Duran and Wham! were exceedingly popular with Icelandic youth as already mentioned. In 1979 Britain had no comparable celebrities to pride herself of in the field of popular music.

Several of those who would head for the United States expect to be met by people whom they know, but not very many of them have been to the US already. This reflects the close cultural, economic and personal ties which have developed between Iceland and the US in the post-war era. Apart from ranking highest on beauty (probably in no small measure thanks to the never-ending stream of Westerns featured in the cinemas and on television) and very high on personal ties, the US outshines the other two in favourable living conditions, according to Table 5. In other words, quite a few of those among our respondents who selected the United States as their favourite country are seing the US as the land of golden opportunities in the economic sense; a view which it would be distinctly difficult to develop of Britain or even the other Nordic countries at the time of the survey.

Table 6 shows the variations in choice according to age and sex.

TABLE 6: Choice of country according to age and sex.

	Boys			Girls		
	10-11 years	12-13 years	14-15 years	10-11 years	12-13 years	14-15 years
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Nordic	33	21	21	41	34	35
UK	18	30	26	14	31	20
USA	18	17	22	12	10	16
All other	30	33	31	32	24	30
N:	117	128	125	145	139	128

We notice the constancy in almost every subgroup of the countries which we are particularly scrutinizing vs. the rest.

The Nordic bias is much stronger among girls than the boys, who on the other hand favour the US in greater measure.

The impressive jump in popularity taken by Britain among the 12-13 year olds of both sexes fits well in with other recent findings which indicate that 12-13 year old boys are much heavier viewers of televised soccer than the age-groups around them (Broddason and Hédinsson 1985), and with the conclusion from a survey in connection with the Icelandic Top Ten list (administered by Channel Two on the radio) that the greatest fans of the much-celebrated English pop-groups are girls aged 12 to 13. It seems, therefore, that the argument about the influence of the popular culture and its media on choice of favourite country is strengthened by the information which Table 6 yields.

7.3. TELEVISION-VIEWING AND FAVOURITE COUNTRY.

Table 7 shows the television-viewing pattern among the young respondents in 1985.

TABLE 7: Television viewing-intensity in 1985 in hours per week: Mean scores within each age and sex category.

	10-11 years	12-13 years	14-15 years	All	N:
Boys	12,36	11,77	11,50	11,79	385
Girls	10,00	10,50	9,74	10,09	435
All	11,04	11,01	10,60	10,89	
N:	272	283	265		820

In 1968 no relationship appeared between television-viewing intensity and choice of favourite country. As was explained in the introduction, television at that time was a very recent phenomenon for many and unknown to some.

In 1979, when television had become an established institution, we found that choice of the United States was positively related to television-viewing intensity.

By 1985 this relationship had disappeared (Table 8).

TABLE 8: Mean scores of television-viewing intensity according to age and choice of favourite country (1985).

	10-11 years	12-13 years	14-15 years	All	N:
Nordic	10,80	10,91	11,36	10,99	245
UK	11,13	11,29	11,18	11,22	181
USA	12,10	10.92	10,26	11,04	123

The apparent confusion that meets the eye in Table 8 is not encouraging in view of our previous discussion about the relationship between the content of television and choice of favourite country. We shall leave the confusion for a while in order to return to it towards the end.

7.4. VIDEO-VIEWING AND FAVOURITE COUNTRY.

As noted in the introductory section of this paper video recorders were introduced on the Icelandic market during the interval between the latter two surveys. We asked our respondents in 1985 about the amount of time that they spent watching video. This question was otherwise identical to the one about television-viewing. According to the answers the whole sample spent on average 4 hours and 37 minutes (4,61 hrs) a week watching video. The following mean scores were obtained with regard to each age and sex category (Table 9):

TABLE 9: Hours per week spent watching video: Mean scores.

	10-11 years	12-13 years	14-15 years	Total
Boys	5,23	4,47	4,67	4,78
Girls	3,89	4,78	4,75	4,45
Total	4,49	4,63	4,71	4,61
N:	262	267	253	782

This table demonstrates that video-viewing has spread into all the age-groups involved in our survey, and that boys and girls participate in this new behaviour in roughly equal measure. The weak general trend towards increased viewing with advancing adolescence becomes blurred when boys and girls are considered separately and it does not yield any conclusive proof that video is above all the medium of adolescence. In another survey, however, which was carried out in March 1985 by two of the present authors, the percentage of video users in different age-groups was established (Broddason and Hédinsson 1985). The following table shows these findings.

TABLE 10 Videotape use according to age. Representative sample of population of Iceland.

	15-20 years %	21-30 years %	31-45 years %	46-60 years %	61-80 years %
Hardly ever watch	28	38	42	54	79
Once in a while	30	34	30	25	16
Every week	25	14	22	13	5
Several times a w.	12	9	2	5	-
Watch daily	5	5	4	3	-

Our evidence points to a decline in television-watching among young Icelanders. Compared to 1979 television-viewing intensity has fallen off in 1985 among all the age-groups involved in our survey, except for the oldest. However, when we take video-watching into consideration as well we find that the total number of hours spent on average in front of the small screen has not diminished at all, in fact quite the opposite has happened (Fig. 1).

In light of our previous dicussion about freedom and control we would suggest that we have here the seeds of heavy viewing in the terms of Gerbner and his associates. This applies not only to the amount of time spent watching the screen, but also to the type of content. Video allows the individual or group a tailor-made programme, and -for better or worse- this obviously means that it will be possible to undermine completely any attempt at a public policy regarding the content of television. Until now the Icelandic "heavy viewer" has willy-nilly been fed a relatively balanced menu of television. From now on the "heavy viewer" will in many cases become much "heavier" than before, due to the revolutionary increase in supply, and his or her menu will in many instances become exceedingly homogeneous.

Now we wish to turn to the relationship between video-watching and choice

of favourite country (Table 11).

TABLE 11: Video-watching and choice of country:
Average hours per week.

	Boys			Girls				
	10-11 years	12-13 years	14-15 years	10-11 years	12-13 years	14-15 years	Total	N:
Nordic	3,26	3,41	3,49	3,45	3,67	4,30	3,62	245
UK	7,17	3,44	3,00	5,49	5,80	4,23	4,71	181
USA	7,12	5,85	5,88	3,93	6,12	5,50	5,77	123
All other	5,12	5,39	5,95	3,71	4,50	5,25	4,96	233
Total	5,23	4,47	4,67	3,89	4,78	4,75	4,61	
N:	117	128	125	145	139	128		782

The table reveals distinct differences between those respondents whose favourite country is a Nordic country and those who choose the US. Not a single subgroup among the former reaches the overall mean of 4,61 hours a week, whereas among those who favour the US, all but one single sub group, that of the youngest girls, stay above the overall mean. The overall difference between those who favour the Nordic countries on the one hand and the US on the other, is 2 hours and 9 minutes. Those who opted for the UK present a rather confused pattern: On average they fall in between, but half of the subcategories fall below the overall mean and the other half above. We find among them both the highest and the lowest averages.

Although it would be premature to start drawing major conclusions from our material at present, we feel justified in suggesting that the apparent confusion of Table 8 finds its explanation in Table 11: The former potential heavy viewer of television has now turned to video, and from now on the relationship between choice of favourite country and television viewing will not be unearthed unless we consider video viewing concomitantly with television-viewing.

The relationship between preponderance for the US and heavy video-viewing, leads us to consider the contents of video recordings on the market. It seems to us that it would fit well with Gerbner's theme about the homogeneous presentation of social reality as it consists virtually exclusively of fictional entertainment in the form of feature films, not a mixture of documentary and fiction, of news and entertainment, as is the case with an ordinary Icelandic television evening programme. There are many complications which we have not dealt with yet, among them the relationship between video-viewing, tv-viewing and choice of favourite country. For one thing it might be interesting to explore what sort of relationship might exist between television-programme preferences, video-viewing intensity and choice of country.

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